

In the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 8, line 30, with the following paragraph:

B1
Either a gasket 70, an O-ring 71, or a dynamic u-cup seal 73 is provided for each of the center section contact surfaces 64,66 to better seal the interfaces between the center section 18 and the wheel halves 14,16. Referring particularly to FIG. 4, which shows a cross-sectional view of a typical dynamic u-cup seal 73, the dynamic u-cup seal 73 is preferred in some applications, particularly where the wheel 12 could flex sufficiently to cause the O-ring 71 to unload and unseal. The dynamic u-cup seal 73 is a conventional sealing mechanism available from a variety of sources. Where the gasket 70 is used, bolt holes 72 and cutouts 73 are provided therein which correspond, respectively, to the bolt holes 67 and lug bolt holes 68 in the center section 18. Where the O-ring 71 or the dynamic u-cup seal 73 is used, a groove ~~72~~ 75 is provided in the contact surface 64,66 of the center section 18 for receiving such.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 9, line 10, with the following paragraph:

B2
Referring particularly to FIG 5, the bead lock ring 20 is a substantially circular ring of the engineered polymer material presenting an outer surface 76 and an inner surface 78, and a plurality of bolt holes 80 extending completely therethrough. The bolt holes 80 are preferably counter-sunk into the outer surface 76 so that the bolt heads do not protrude therepast. The inner surface 78 of the bead lock ring 20 presents a second bead lock surface 79 and a taper 81. The second bead lock surface 79 presents projections 82 corresponding to and operable to be received within and interlockingly cooperate with the slots ~~72~~ 62 of the first bead lock surface 58 of the outside end 60 of the outboard wheel half 16. When the projections 82 are received within the slots ~~72~~ 62, the bolt holes 60,80 will be properly aligned. Thus, the projections 82 form a second portion of the alignment mechanism mentioned above. The taper 81 facilitates properly aligning the outboard tire bead between the first and second bead locking surfaces 58,79.

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 11, line 5, with the following paragraph:

B3 Referring again to the wheel 12 of the first preferred modular embodiment, in exemplary use and operation the modular wheel components are initially provided in a disassembled state. During assembly, if gaskets 70 are used, the gaskets 70 are set upon the center section contact surfaces 64,66 such that the cutouts 73 of the gaskets 70 properly align with the lug bolts holes 68 of the center section 18. If O-rings 71 or dynamic u-cup seals 73 are used, they are installed by pressing them into the grooves 72 75 provided in the center section contact surfaces 64,66. The inboard wheel half 14 and the outboard wheel half 16 are then coupled with the center section 18 by bringing the contact surface 40 of the inside end 32 of the inboard wheel half 14 into contact with the inboard center section contact surface 64; bringing the contact surface (not shown) of the inside end 44 of the outboard wheel half 16 into contact with the outboard center section contact surface 66; aligning the bolt holes 42,67,52; passing bolts through the bolt holes 42,67,52 in the direction of the inboard wheel half 14; and applying nuts on the inboard ends of the bolts. The bolts are then torqued to specifications appropriate to the wheel design and application.

Please replace the text of the Abstract on page 24 with the following paragraph:

B4
A lightweight, energy-absorbing, flexible vehicle wheel (12) constructed from an injection molded engineered polymer, such as, for example, a toughened nylon reinforced with carbon fibers, glass fibers, or kevlar fibers, wherein the wheel (12) may be embodied in either modular or one-piece construction. In a modular embodiment, the wheel (12) ~~comprises~~ broadly ~~comprises~~ includes an inboard wheel half (14); an outboard wheel half (16); a center section (18); a bead lock ring (20); and a removable mud plug (22). Stiffening ribs (38,54,55) and varying cross-sectional thicknesses are provided in the inboard and outboard wheel halves (14,16) for controlling stiffness; gaskets (70), O-rings (71), or dynamic u-cup seals (73) are provided for sealing contact surfaces (40,44,64,66); and an interlocking alignment mechanism (62,82) is provided for aligning the bead ring (20) on the outboard wheel half (16).